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Myron Matson

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Book M43

Myron Watson

MEMORIAL

PROCEEDINGS OF THE SENATE

UPON THE DEATH OF

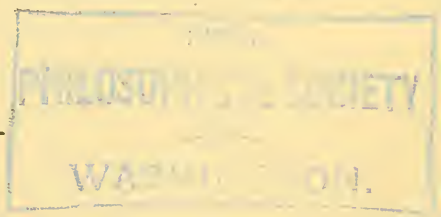
HON. MYRON MATSON,

LATE A SENATOR FROM THE TWENTY-FIFTH DISTRICT

OF

PENNSYLVANIA.

General assembly. Senate



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RESOLUTION.

In the Senate,
April 30, 1907.

Resolved (if the House of Representatives concur), That one thousand (1,000) copies of the proceedings of the memorial services held in honor of the late Honorable Myron Matson, be printed for the use of the Senate.

FRANK A. JUDD,
Chief Clerk of the Senate.

The foregoing resolution concurred in April 30, 1907.

THOMAS H. GARVIN,
Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives.

Approved—The 3d day of May, A. D. 1907.

EDWIN S. STUART.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE SENATE

UPON THE DEATH OF

HON. MYRON MATSON.

In the Senate,
Monday, March 25, 1907.

On motion of Senator Williams, the following resolution was twice read, considered and agreed to, viz:

Resolved, That a committee of eight members of the Senate be appointed to draft suitable resolutions on the death of the late Senator Myron Matson, who died on December fifteen, one thousand nine hundred and six, and present such resolutions at a special meeting to be held on Wednesday, April tenth, one thousand nine hundred and seven, at three o'clock post meridian.

By subsequent action of the Senate the date of the special session was fixed for Tuesday, April thirtieth, at three-thirty o'clock post meridian.

MEMORIAL RESOLUTIONS AND ADDRESSES.

In the Senate,

Tuesday, April 30, 1907.

Afternoon Session.

Pursuant to adjournment, the Senate was called to order at three-thirty o'clock post meridian, Lieutenant-Governor Murphy in the Chair.

PRAYER.

Prayer was offered by the Chaplain, Reverend K. J. Stewart, as follows:

Oh, Thou, who hast abolished death and brought life and immortality to light in the Gospel, Thou art the Light of the world and the Light of men. Thou art the resurrection and the life, and hast given us a clear vision of the future world beyond the grave. We hail Thee as the Prince of Life, and we plead with Thee for strength and comfort which Thou alone canst give. In Thy providence Thou hast removed from the members of this Senate a friend and associate. We thank Thee for Thy kindness to him, in sustaining him so long in a position of influence and honor. We thank Thee for his loyalty and patriotism. We thank Thee for the memories his associates have of him, as a friend and fellow-member. We thank Thee that he was able to serve the State, and that he had a part in the legislation of this great Commonwealth.

Now, Oh Lord, we pray Thee to extend Thy Mercy to the members of the family from which he was taken. Deal kindly with his neighbors and friends in the community from which he came. Strengthen, comfort and encourage their hearts. But especially come near in this providence to his colleagues and associates here. May every one of them be ready at any time to give an account of their stewardship to the great

Judge of all the earth. Forbid that their minds should be so absorbed with the things of time and sense, that they shall forget the culture of their immortal spirits. May their chief affections be set upon things unseen and eternal, and their dearest treasures be in Heaven.

And, Oh God, grant that as life passes, they may have the blessed consciousness of making others happy about them; of purifying the moral atmosphere of the communities from whence they come; of uplifting their fellow-men; making the State more prosperous, the Nation stronger and of swinging the old world nearer to God by their life and actions.

Give to us all, Oh God, a well-grounded hope of eternal life, and, at last, administer to our souls an abundant entrance into Thine eternal joy, through Jesus, our Redeemer. Amen.

Mr. WILLIAMS. Mr. President, as chairman of the committee to prepare resolutions expressive of the sentiment of the Senate on the death of Hon. Myron Matson, I present the following resolutions:

RESOLUTIONS.

Whereas, Our brother, Senator Myron Matson, a member of the Senate of Pennsylvania, of the Twenty-fifth District, has, after the close of the last session, passed from the busy scenes of life to the repose and peace of eternal rest, and

Whereas, His public and official career has distinguished him as one of the foremost citizens of our Commonwealth, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate give expression to the great loss it has sustained in the death of our colleague, whose abilities as a legislator and whose industry, grasp of business and enthusiasm command the respect of the people of the Commonwealth;

Resolved, That his great enterprise in the development of the oil and gas industries of the State and his large financial interests and his forcefulness in the conduct of all the industrial, commercial and financial matters with which he was identified marked him as the successful man of affairs;

Resolved, That his zeal in furthering the cause of public education, his interest in hospital work and in everything tending to the betterment of humanity, as shown by his generosity in private life and his contributions to the cause of higher education, have erected a monument more enduring than can be erected by his contemporaries;

Resolved, That the loss to his own community and to his many associates is irreparable. The loss to the Commonwealth is great, but the greatest of all is to his own home, and we, the members of the Senate surviving, tender our condolence to his family so bereaved and direct that a copy of these resolutions, duly engrossed and attested, be forwarded to his widow.

GEO. W. WILLIAMS,
J. C. STINEMAN,
J. HENRY COCHRAN,
W. H. MANBECK,
STERLING R. CATLIN,
E. M. HERBST,
WEBSTER GRIM,
A. E. SISSON.

ADDRESSES.

Mr. WILLIAMS. Mr. President, I feel that it is fitting and proper for the Senate to hold services in memory of those members who pass from this life during the term for which they were elected, and in accord with custom this hour has been named in which to pay tribute to the memory of Senator Myron Matson, for six years a member of this honorable body.

Briefly I will refer, and in a general way, to the life of Senator Matson, feeling that it will be more appropriate for others who were officially associated with him to speak of his labors as a member of this body.

Myron Matson was born the thirteenth day of September, one thousand eight hundred and fifty, at Rushford, Allegany

county, New York, and died at his home, in the city of Bradford, on the fifteenth day of December, one thousand nine hundred and six. He left home when but twenty years of age, going to Tidioute, Pennsylvania, where he engaged in the oil business, which he followed up to the time of his death. He mastered this business, and, with his keen foresight and business sagacity, his interest increased, until at the time of his death he was recognized as one of the largest individual producers of crude oil in this county, and, in addition thereto, he was largely interested in banking and mining. He was an enterprising and public-spirited citizen, ever willing to assist in advancing the interests of his home city, and a liberal giver to religious institutions and to charity. On a recent visit to the city of Bradford I was told of his many acts of benevolence, of which the public know but little. In meeting his fellow-men he was always kind, considerate and generous of them regardless of their positions in life. His memory will ever remain dear to his friends and to his colleagues in this body; they all mourn his death. In the year one thousand nine hundred, after repeated conferences, he was named as the Republican candidate for Senator in the Twenty-fifth District. His nomination did not receive the united support of the members of his party and for a time his election seemed in doubt; but through his wise political generalship his friends were rallied to his active support and he was elected by a majority of two thousand nine hundred and twenty-five. He was a resourceful man in knowing how to produce results beneficial to the people of his district, and his labors in looking after their large and diversified interests were so satisfactory that in the year one thousand nine hundred and four he was renominated without opposition and his election followed by ten thousand and fifty-four majority.

He was devoted to his official duties and always urgent in pressing the demands of his constituents. It is to be regretted that the people of the Twenty-fifth District are not to have the benefit of his years of experience in this body, during the present session of the Legislature. One year ago he went abroad for his health, and after traveling in Europe for sev-

eral months, returned home in the early fall, apparently much improved. As late as November eighth, one thousand nine hundred and six, he informed me that he expected to be here during all of this session, but in the wisdom of the All-Wise Ruler of this universe it was not so to be. When death comes, so great is the change, even though expected, it is startling, and so it was to me when notified of the death of my good friend, Myron Matson.

"He was strong in the strength that cannot seek
By deed or thought to hurt the weak."

Mr. HERBST. Mr. President, We are again forcibly reminded by these memorial exercises that "life is a bubble, and in length a span." Myron Matson entered the Senate with me on January first, one thousand nine hundred and one. He now sleeps the sleep that knows no waking with eight of his and my former colleagues in this body. During these few brief years Osbourn, Magee, Vaughan, Kemerer, Harrison, Patton, Hackett, Neely and Matson have passed to the great beyond, that undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveller returns.

How fitting, then, that upon a solemn occasion like this we should not only recall the virtues and pay tribute to the memory of our departed friend, but also with reverent awe cast an introspective glance at our own condition, and seriously consider whether our life has been worth living. Will the world be any the better for our brief sojourn in it? May each one be able to answer with Rome's greatest orator: "Brevis a natura nobis vita data est; at memoria bene reditae vitae sempiterna." The life given to us by nature is short; but the memory of a well spent life is eternal.

Under the old ring arrangement of this chamber, Senator Matson sat near me, and I soon learned to like him on account of his genial sunny temperament and jovial good nature. Later in committee work, and on the floor of the Senate I found him a manly man, exercising good common sense, and business sagacity. He was a credit to his adopted State, and by his early death Pennsylvania lost a useful citizen and his associates a good friend.

He was a man of work. By his industry he rose from poverty to opulence in this world's goods. When about ready to enjoy the fruits of his labor, the common fate of most men befell him, and the grim reaper cut short his career long ere he attained the biblical age of three score and ten years. He could only but well at eventide when the long shadows fell thick and fast epitomize his life by saying:

"Let me but do my work from day to day,
In the field or forest, at desk or loom,
In roaring market place or tranquil room:
Let me but find it in my heart to say,
When vagrant wishes beckon me astray,
'This is my work; my blessing; not my doom;
Of all who live I am the one by whom
This work can best be done in the right way.'"

To his family I extend my sincere sympathy, and to his memory I bring this brief chaplet of respect and regard.

Mr. McNEES. Mr. President and Fellow-Senators: Distinctly do I remember my last conversation with Senator Matson. It was during the session of one thousand nine hundred and five. He frequently drove to the Capitol, and on this occasion we drove up together and his condition of health was alluded to.

He did not complain, yet there seemed an undertone of sadness in his voice, indicating a presentiment that he was a victim of an incurable disease, a premonition that even then his feet were approaching that river over whose dark and chilly waters he must soon voyage alone. I believe that on this evening he was contemplating that most solemn of all events —that last great struggle in which wealth and fame and position are powerless to aid, and from which the utmost devotion and love of the dearest friends are powerless to save.

Like his great exemplar, he must "tread the wine press alone."

It was not my good fortune to have either a long or an intimate acquaintance with Senator Matson, meeting him for the first time during the session of one thousand nine hundred and five and at which his condition of health prevented con-

stant attendance. But he impressed me, as he must have impressed others, as being a man of unusual strength of character, of great will power—a man whose appearance at once commanded confidence and respect, a man on whose judgment one would instinctively rely.

He was a man of few words, but those words were well considered and carried weight—a man whose integrity and sincerity, as well as his words, were never questioned.

He served his constituents faithfully and well and so far as his infirmities permitted gave the closest attention to matters of legislation.

His level-headedness and excellent judgment caused his opinion to be much sought after by his fellow-Senators.

He was a man of affairs, a typical business man, one of the remarkable products of this most remarkable country and age. He had talents in this direction and the talents were not hid in a napkin, but rightfully and energetically used.

There are those who would deprive a man of the credit to which he is entitled by reason of a life spent in honest industry. With these latter day apostles of socialism the possession of wealth is a crime and the old fashioned homely virtues of energy, thrift and economy are badges of infamy. But we believe their theories are not consistent with the teachings of experience, the laws of God, or conducive to the advancement of civilization.

In the mere possession of wealth I can discern no moral element, but when I think of its power for good in the world, of the human suffering it may alleviate, of its aid to science and its power to add to the sum of human knowledge and human happiness, I must consider its possession a blessing. Respect should not attach to wealth except when honestly acquired and rightfully used, nor should disgrace attach to poverty unless that condition be brought about through the violation of God's laws and unwillingness to exert every honest effort to prevent it. Diligence in business should by no means be the least part of our religion.

There are conditions under which the possession of wealth is a crime and other conditions under which it may be equally criminal to the poor.

Whatever of success in financial matters attended Senator Matson was due to his forethought, his energy, his high business principles and his willingness to work, while the less successful were enjoying the comforts of ease. In short, to his determination to make the most of the talents with which nature had endowed him and that this success was honestly achieved, no one who knew him has ever doubted.

At every session of the Legislature we appropriate millions for the purpose of charity and education and where would this money be obtained were it not for such men as our deceased friend, and it is a matter of sincere regret that at the present day such men are not appreciated at their true value

But the work of Senator Matson is done. His busy, active, energetic life, with all its varied interests, is closed. The account is made up and who shall say it was not a success. That the world is better for his having lived in it, all who knew him will attest. And after all this is the real test of character

"For forms of faith let graceless zealots fight,
His cannot be wrong whose life was in the right."

Senator Matson was faithful to his friends, just to those who opposed him, honest, capable and conscientious in the discharge of both public and private duties. With a heart gentle and tender as a woman's and a hand ever open to the call of distress.

That he was human we do not deny else he were not one of us but, "E'en his failings leaned to virtue's side." We believe that the good men do lives after them not only in the book of the recording angel but in the lives, the hearts and the memories of other men, hence the place and memory of Senator Matson is secure for it was ever his purpose to honor God, to benefit mankind, to serve as best he could the necessities of his race. To do this is to be truly great, and he who does it is not only great but good.

But is this the end of Senator Matson? Was he brought into being simply to exist for this brief span? Are the powers of his mind and the attributes of his soul to be forever annihilated? Is this being created in the image of his Maker, henceforth to be less than an atom of matter?

Occasions like these bring irresistibly before our minds this most tremendous question of the ages: "If a man die, shall he live again?" This question has been at once the most perplexing and profound that has confronted the sages and philosophers of all ages. And still its answer eludes their finite reasoning.

Still it hangs before their minds like a grim spectre. Still to them is the question shrouded in mystery, like the mystic hieroglyphics in the chambers of some dimly lighted and ancient hallways.

But to the Christian the voice of the Christian's God comes ringing down the centuries, bringing with it hope and joy and peace: "I am the resurrection and the life, because I have lived, you shall live also." This is the divine answer to our secret dread—our longing after immortality. "Tis heaven itself that points out an hereafter and assures eternity to man."

Unhesitatingly, then, do we believe that we are born for a higher destiny than that of earth, for a place where the God-like faculties with which we are here endowed shall continue to grow and develop throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity. A land, too, where the rainbow never fades and where the loved ones who pass so quickly before us here shall remain in our presence forever.

Then, of Senator Matson, may we not suppose—nay, do we not believe that as the time of his departure drew near, as the scenes of his beloved county of McKean were fading from his view, and as the darkness of evening gathered about him, that even then there broke upon his enraptured vision the brightness of an eternal morning.

Mr. HULINGS. Mr. President, It was not my good fortune to sit in this body with Senator Matson, but for many years I knew him well.

Throughout the oil country of Pennsylvania he was known as a generous, kindly, big-hearted man, of a singularly sympathetic and gentle nature, yet capable of enormous energy when aroused. His ear was never dull to the cry of distress, and

the needy and unfortunate found in him a friend whose charity was uncounted.

He was a fair type of the "oil-country man," generous, enthusiastic, energetic, not afraid to "put his fortune to the touch and win or lose it all." Sounding the gamut of human experience from poverty to affluence, Myron Matson was a man accustomed to the frowns of untoward fortune, meeting them always with a cheerful courage. Never cast down by defeat, his equanimity was undisturbed by fortune's glittering favors. Shrinking instinctively from the infliction of suffering or disappointment upon others, yet, when his convictions were fixed, he was firm, loyal and unswerving.

To-day the Senate of Pennsylvania, that once knew him as a loved and respected member, pauses a moment to note his departure.

The man we knew as friend for more than a quarter of a century has gone from amongst us. He has met the great tragedy of life and, passing beyond the vale, its mysteries are unrolling before him.

How strange it all is! The angel of the sable wing, pluming his silent flight, delivers his inexorable summonses. The tenderest ties of nature are sundered. To father, to mother, wife, children, friend, these summonses come. They go out. We follow them down to the margin of the dark river; we call to them in the accents of grief, but they are unheeding, and they go out, out into the darkness, and from the echoless shore there comes back no whisper. What means it? If a man die, shall he live again? This is the most insistent question of all the ages.

Cato, the Pagan synic, voiced this thought when he said:

"It must be so—Plato, thou reason'st well!—
Else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,
This longing after immortality?
Or whence this secret dread, and inward horror,
Of falling into nought? why shrinks the soul
Back on herself, and startles at destruction?
'Tis the divinity that stirs within us;
'Tis heaven itself, that points out an hereafter,

And intimates eternity to man.
Eternity! thou pleasing, dreadful thought!
Through what variety of untried being,
Through what new scenes and changes must we pass!
The wide, the unbounded prospect, lies before me;
But shadows, clouds, and darkness, rest upon it.
Here will I hold. If there's a power above us,
(And that there is all nature cries aloud
Through all her works,) he must delight in virtue;
And that which he delights in, must be happy.
But when! or where!—This world was made for Caesar.
I'm weary of conjectures."

Bryant gives a more hopeful expression of the same fate when he says:

"So live, that when thy summons comes to join
The innumerable caravan, which moves
To that mysterious realm, where each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death,
Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,
Scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and soothed
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave,
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him and lies down to pleasant dreams."

All nature is prophetic of a life beyond the grave. The vernal resurrections which meet the senses with beauty and perfume, as nature responds to the call of the seasons, are but a type of the deathless spark implanted in man's breast.

This hope and belief has been at the foundation of every noble aspiration, every lofty motive. Every religion worthy of the name, since History began to enroll her scroll, has been based upon the hope of man's immortality. But it remained for the Great Master and the religion He taught to change this hope to assurance and for faith and longing to give to the world proof and demonstration that though a man die, yet shall he live again.

Believing this, we may feel assured that all is well with our friend. We may regard our friends who have died as having merely passed into another apartment, and ourselves as still remaining in the vestibule of existence, soon to follow

those whom we have known and loved, where we shall know and be known.

Mr. SISSON. Mr. President, once more the Senate of Pennsylvania is in session in memory of a departed member. It is with a feeling of deep sadness that I join this afternoon in this session held for the purpose of recording tribute to one whom we held in the highest esteem, trusted and venerated.

There was a personal feeling of distinct loss when the sad death of Senator Matson became known, particularly affecting those who were associates with him since he became a member of the Senate in one thousand nine hundred and one.

In life it is given us to know many men of diverse and varied characteristics and temperaments. Some instantly attract us to them by their winning personality, their honesty of purpose and their uprightness of character. Preeminent in this classification I unhesitatingly inscribe on the tablets of my memory the name of our departed associate.

Coming to the Senate at the session of one thousand nine hundred and one, we were thrown together constantly, were the occupants of adjacent seats and from the contiguity of the districts which we had the honor to represent, had many similar interests to care for. We were both reelected in one thousand nine hundred and four, and it was a great pleasure to me to again meet him here at the convening of the session of one thousand nine hundred and five.

His disposition was to look upon the bright side of things, and his genial social qualifications made him always a desirable companion. He was always wont to meet an old friend whom he had not seen for a time, with a new and pleasant story. Through this constant and close association with Senator Matson I was offered unusual opportunities to become thoroughly conversant with his character and abilities. The more intimate this acquaintanceship became the better was I able to appreciate his many sterling qualities.

He was a splendid type of that American manhood that is not daunted by obstacles and not dismayed by adverse conditions. Beginning his career in humble circumstances in the oil fields of Western Pennsylvania, by sheer pluck and

signal ability he rose to the high position which he occupied at the time of his death.

By thrift, industry and good business judgment he had amassed a large fortune. His business interests were not only large in the East, but they were large in mid-continent enterprises, and extended to the Pacific Coast.

In his later years, and after he had achieved success in a business way, he referred to no part of his experiences in life with more gratification and pleasure, than to the determined way in which he commenced the battle of life for himself, at the age of twenty years, as a day laborer.

Of such men and energy is the backbone of this nation composed and so long as this type continues will it endure.

Loyalty to his friends, and open-handed charity, an inherent honesty and uprightness of character were among the chiefest of his characteristics. As a citizen, a husband and father, a representative of the people, he always carried out to the best of his signal abilities the duties which were self-imposed or were entrusted to him.

My friend, Senator Matson, has crossed the valley of the shadows. We who remain revere his memory, we mourn his loss but carry constantly with us comforting recollections and an assurance that all is well with him.

To what my brothers have so well said as to, "If a man die, shall he live again," I will add: "In the night of death, hope sees a star and listening love hears the rustle of a wing."

Mr. FOX. Mr. President, I add my tribute to the memory of our departed companion out of the gratitude of my heart for I know I had his sincere friendship and most kindly wishes.

The loss by death of one who has been closely and intimately associated with us in any of life's work is always accompanied by pain and grief, but when death robs us of a dear friend we feel that it is almost irreparable.

The daily life of the deceased was a busy one. It was burdened with public duties and business cares, yet he was always reaching out the hand of succor to those who were in want and distress. His life was not circumscribed within

the narrow limits of selfishness, but was devoted to the happiness of his fellow-man. He was constantly rendering acts of kindness to his friends and acquaintances. His pre-eminent trait was that of kindness, and who of us possesses any trait more admirable or more beautiful? How rich and superior is the man who possesses it! How impoverished and inferior is the man who lacks it! The best portion of a good man's life are his little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and love. As the "snows of yesteryear" have vanished but only in form and are still present in earth's blooming beauty, so the kindnesses of our friend have touched into activity enduring forces that will move others to nobler and more beautiful lives.

It is to be believed of any charitable man when he has passed over life's unresting sea and the recording angel reviews the record of his life, whatever sins of omission or commission may there appear, will after all be condoned because of that kindness and gracious love for his fellow-man.

Leigh Hunt beautifully expressed this thought in his poem Abou Ben Adhem:

"Abou Ben Adhem—may his tribe increase!
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace
And saw within the moonlight in his room
Making it rich and like a lily in bloom,
An angel writing in a book of gold;
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the presence in the room he said,
"What writest thou?" The vision raised its head,
And with a look made of all sweet accord,
Answered, "The names of those who love the Lord."
"And is mine one?" said Abou. "Nay, not so,"
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerily still, and said, "I pray thee, then,
Write me as one that loves his fellowmen."
The angel wrote, and vanished. The next night
It came again with a great wakening light,
And showed the names whom love of God had blessed—
And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest!"

Mr. President, The frequent passing of members of this body leaves upon us a deep and ineffaceable impression of the importance of a good and kind life.

Therefore,

"Build thee more stately mansions,
O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last
Shut thee from Heaven with a dome more vast
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!"

The PRESIDENT. Are there any further remarks on these resolutions? If not, the question is on the adoption of the resolutions. On this the yeas and nays will be taken and the Clerk will proceed with the call.

The yeas and nays were taken in accordance with the direction of the Chair, and were as follows:

YEAS.

Messrs. Brown, Campbell, Catlin, Cochran, Crawford, Crow, Cunningham, Dewalt, Dimeling, Edmiston, Fisher, Fox, Gerberich, Godcharles, Grim, Hall, Heidelbaugh, Herbst, Hulings, James, Keyser, Kline, Klinedinst, Langfitt, Manbeck, McIlhenny, McNees, McNichol, Miller (Northampton), Miller (Bedford), Murphy, Phillips, Quail, Roberts, Rodgers, Rowland, Scott, Sisson, Sproul, Stewart, Stineman, Templeton, Thomson, Walton, Wilbert, Williams and Woods—47.

NAYS.

None.

ABSENT OR NOT VOTING.

Messrs. Blewitt, Tustin and Vare.

THE PRESIDENT. The resolutions are unanimously agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. STINEMAN. Mr. President, I move that the Senate do now adjourn out of respect for the late Senator, Myron Matson.

Mr. GODCHARLES. Mr. President, I second the motion.

The question being.

Will the Senate agree to the motion?

It was agreed to.

Whereupon,

At four fifteen post meridian the memorial meeting adjourned.

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